

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1053  
By DeBerry J

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the administration and staff of National Ornamental Metal Museum on the occasion of the museum's 25th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable organizations that are celebrating milestones in their venerable existence; and

WHEREAS, the National Ornamental Metal Museum is one such organization that evinces the highest standards of integrity and probity in all of its endeavors and exhibits; and

WHEREAS, this noble institution hosts its 25th Anniversary Celebration this year; and

WHEREAS, attracting visitors from across the country and around the world, the National Ornamental Metal Museum is the only institution in the Americas dedicated to the preservation and advancement of fine metalwork; and

WHEREAS, located in Memphis, Tennessee, the National Ornamental Metal Museum began in 1976 when a group of metal fabricators and suppliers founded the institution; the museum opened its doors to the public in February 1979 when it began to offer exhibits of the best contemporary and historic metalwork, including jewelry, swords, hollowware, enamel, sculpture, and architectural metalwork; and

WHEREAS, Memphis seemed a natural location for the museum; James Stafford, the president of the National Ornamental Metal Museum Foundation, first noted the Southern heritage of ornamental metalwork in 1977; and

WHEREAS, the museum now includes a sculpture garden, shaded by several 100-year-old oak trees, with works of American, German, and Italian sculptors; and

WHEREAS, the beautiful anniversary gates at the museum's entrance feature original handcrafted rosettes that were crafted and contributed by more than 180 artists from eighteen countries; and

WHEREAS, the museum also features the Schering-Plough Smithy where staff artists and blacksmiths design and fabricate metalworked items while visitors watch them work; the many items made in the workshop include a sterling silver coffee and tea service for the USS Tennessee, a suit of Etruscan armor for the Memphis Wonders International Cultural Series, and trophies for the Memphis in May International Barbecue Cooking Contest; and

WHEREAS, Jim Wallace, the museum's first and only director, has guided the museum from its humble origins with limited funding for employees and for heating expenses to its current international reputation for exhibiting the finest in historical and contemporary metalwork and for the high quality of craftsmanship taught in its educational programs; and

WHEREAS, the National Ornamental Metal Museum also serves as a reference center for information on metalwork and metalworkers; and

WHEREAS, the Greater Memphis Arts Council, the Tennessee Arts Commission, the River Bluff Forge Council, corporate and individual support, and many loyal volunteers have also contributed greatly to the enormous success of this outstanding institution; and

WHEREAS, the National Ornamental Metal Museum will celebrate its 25th Anniversary, the opening of the Lawler Foundry, and its newly terraced bluff with music, barbecue, drinks, and other festivities on the afternoon of April 18, 2004; and

WHEREAS, in addition to this celebration, the museum is commemorating this momentous occasion with a special series of exhibitions entitled *A Work in Progress*; the series of three exhibits will focus on the works of artists who have worked at the museum, selections from the permanent collection, and works of artists who "hang out" at the museum; and

WHEREAS, for its many contributions to the artistic community of this State and this nation, the National Ornamental Metal Museum, dubbed a "Mecca for metalsmiths" by the American Craft Council, certainly deserves the recognition of this General Assembly on the special occasion of its 25th Anniversary; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED  
THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE  
CONCURRING, that we commend the administration and staff of The National Ornamental  
Metal Museum for their meritorious service to the good people of Tennessee during the  
museum's 25 years of prosperous existence and extend our best wishes for every continued  
success in the museum's future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared  
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.